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# Advocate of Peace.

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## CONTENTS.

PAGE

EDITORIALS ..... 185-187

Secretary Root in South America—The Practical Problem of Limitation of Armaments.

EDITORIAL NOTES ..... 187-189

Limitation of Armaments—"On the Brotherhood of Man"—Who Can Stop Wars?—Burritt's Comparison—International Law Association—Off to the Peace Congress.

BREVITIES ..... 189-190

## GENERAL ARTICLES:

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's Speech at the London Inter-parliamentary Conference ..... 190-192

The Formula for Disarmament. *By Otto Umfrid.* ..... 192-195

The Teaching of History. *By William A. Mowry, Ph.D.* ..... 195-197

*LL.D.* ..... 197-198

Two Pictures ..... 197-198

A Dream. *By John Ruskin.* ..... 198

A Child's Ideal. *By Mabel Thomson.* ..... 198-199

Members of the American Peace Society ..... 199-205

## Secretary Root in South America.

Secretary Root's visit to South America was, by those who had learned the nature of the mission, expected to have important results in its bearings upon the relations of our country to the republics south of us. It has been an open secret for some years that suspicion and fear of the United States have been steadily growing among the Latin-American States.

Two or three causes have contributed to produce these feelings. Chief of these, without doubt, was the action of our government, after the war with Spain, in seizing Porto Rico in this hemisphere, as well as the Philippines and other islands in the East. This unwonted action led naturally to the suspicion that our government cherished the purpose, however disguised, to seize any territory, particularly in the western world, for which an opportunity might offer or easily be made. The Panama affair only served to intensify this suspicion.

These feelings of distrust were deepened by certain utterances of the "big stick" type which from time to time emanated from Washington, and led our southern neighbors to fear that our government might easily on slight pretext, under cover of the beneficence of the Monroe Doctrine, so enlarge its self-assumed "police functions" over the whole of America as seriously to interfere with not only their

international but also their domestic rights as independent states.

The sense of their own actual or relative weakness, in the presence of the Great Republic, worked further to increase their anxiety, which was beginning to voice itself in several parts of Latin America. Resentment even was beginning to show itself at certain points.

It was this situation which induced Secretary Root to undertake his visit to the South American capitals, at the time of the meeting of the third Pan-American Conference. The purpose of the mission—and this has since been shown by his speeches—was to counteract this growing distrust, which, though in the Secretary's opinion not yet serious, was in danger of becoming so. It was a delicate mission, the success of which required not only wisdom and tact, but also the utmost candor, sincerity and straightforwardness. In this spirit it was, we have every reason to believe, undertaken by Mr. Root, and so accepted by the governments visited.

So far the results of the mission,—the first of its kind, we believe, on so extensive a scale ever undertaken by any Secretary of State or Minister of Foreign Affairs,—have been all that could be desired. It has been of a nature to appeal very powerfully to the Latin-American people, who lay more stress on visits and forms and etiquette than we do. Mr. Root's reception has everywhere been most cordial, generous and enthusiastic. His hosts have been lavish in their expression of appreciation of the honor done them by him in visiting them, and of respect and gratitude towards the United States for what it has done for them in the past.

But vastly more important than all this have been Mr. Root's speeches and the manner in which they have been received. He has told the South Americans plainly, in every capital where he has spoken, that the United States has no desire or purpose to interfere with their international position, their domestic affairs, their independence, or their territorial possessions. He has assured them that this country is sincerely disposed to respect their rights, and interested to see them strong, orderly and prosperous. In Rio Janeiro he said:

"We wish for no victories except those of peace. We wish for no territory except our own and no sovereignty except over ourselves. We deem the independence and rights of the smallest and weakest